

THE CONNOISSEUR.

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WESTMINSTER HALL EXHIBITION.

THE first idea presented to the mind, on reading the annual announcements of Her Majesty's Commissioners for the Fine Arts is, that painters, as a body, are receiving large sums of money from the state. An alarm is then excited amongst those who have been denied by nature the faculties necessary for the due appreciation of these productions. Men like Lords Brougham and Campbell, though according in nothing else, combine to denounce a taste for the Fine Arts as a foolish vanity, or an idle affectation, which those of any general reputation for cleverness can well afford to despise; they, therefore, particularly the former, omit no occasion for shewing hostility to the project of establishing a name and a renown for the English school amongst European artists.

We might shew these law lords that the manufacture (we use a word they may possibly comprehend) of a picture from wood, flax, a few vegetable extracts, earths, and minerals, may afterwards be exported with as much or more advantage to our rate of exchange, than any bale of goods we know. They may, on enquiry learn, that for a long period there has been, and that there is at present, a continual importation of pictures, prepared expressly for the English market; the preparers calculating, to a certainty, upon the ignorance these law lords would labor to maintain. Now, had the great mass of the community such instruction as may and will be afforded by the contemplation of what is tolerably good, consequent on the success of these measures, such trash would not have been prepared for us, or, if prepared, would not have been received. These are advantages to our political economy, derivable from this movement, beyond anything our law lords ever contrived or imagined. But while they assume that the sums distributed on these occasions, are a pecuniary advantage conferred on the artists as a body, the artist himself knows and feels the contrary to be the fact; for, if the British school succeed in achieving high rank in history painting, it will be aided by much greater sacrifices on the part of the artist than of the state.

Let us take the present Exhibition for an example,—six artists have received commissions to prepare each a cartoon, a colored sketch, and a specimen of fresco painting, for which each was to receive £400. Let us observe, that all these gentlemen, among many others, had furnished specimens of fresco painting, &c., last year, for which they received nothing, and that several of them have attained such eminence in their profession, as renders the sale of any of their productions, at high remunerative prices, positively certain. Let us afterwards examine the cartoons

themselves, and we shall find that the £400. has not in any case more than paid the time and expense of the cartoon's production, and in one case, at least, the price is in no comparison with its value. Again—there are three prizes of £200. each, in all £600. for prizes; for which there is a competition of thirty-one cartoons. Divide the £600. between thirty-one competitors, and it allows for the value of each, below £20. It is quite certain the amount paid for canvas, colors, models, and costumes, besides, in many cases, the hire of a room sufficiently large for the size of the subject, would be, on an average, double that sum, without taking the value of the artist's time at all into the account, shewing that, as a mere pecuniary investment, a Derby sweep would have presented greater temptations.

This, we think, may be sufficient to satisfy any one under a law lord, that the artist pays his full share of the expense incurred by the present experiment, while, if it fails, he will be the only sufferer; for, allowing its success in producing talent sufficient for the works now in supposition, where may it look for a continuation of patronage when they shall have been completed.

The prevailing fault of these cartoons, is a want of elevation in the character of their design. To avoid technicalities, we will explain our meaning of the term. A picture, besides telling its story well, should do so agreeably; and, as we delight in the contemplation of beauty in natural objects, the painter should only select beautiful models for representation. No matter what the passion to be expressed, all its varieties may be most perfectly depicted on a fine character of countenance,—rage, jealousy, and despair, expressed by a beautiful woman become terrible, while, with an ugly or mean character of features, they may be ridiculous. 'Tis the same with expression of attitude, as regard the limbs, the chest, and neck. Any required peculiarity should rather appear a consequence of the passion itself, than an original meanness or defect in natural formation; of course, in historic characters, known deformities may be indicated. Now in seeking perfectness for these forms, the artist's judgment becomes more and more refined and sublimated, until he has obtained, in his own mind, a type of beauty, subject to its fitness for the age, position, rank, &c., of the object to be represented. This is his *beau ideal*, and this model, existing only in his mind's eye, becomes the standard by which he elevates and corrects the living subject,—of which he must, from time to time, continue to make use; for, let us not be understood to mean that the artist can ever safely submit himself to the guidance of his *beau ideal* merely. Fuseli and Westall in England, and David and a host of Frenchmen, are melancholy examples of its consequence. We find this

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want of elevation and refinement in form, very general in this exhibition; a fault only to be corrected by returning to the contemplation of the antique, which should never have been entirely discontinued.

Another crying sin in these cartoons, is, want of intention in the composition. Here, also, the story may be told well without being told agreeably; that is, the meaning and intention of the artist may be completely understood, and yet the whole picture uninteresting and unpleasant to contemplate. Attention to the laws of form, will teach that certain combinations of lines become agreeable without any reference to their meaning. It would be futile in this notice to attempt defining the laws by which they operate, and there is, at present, no acknowledged regulations to refer to. The principles are, no doubt, virtually the same as those of musical harmony. Color, light, and shade, and almost everything we know, is systemized—if systemized at all—by analogy with rules only tolerably understood by the scientific contrapuntist. Thus sounds, which scarcely leave a memory in the ear, have their code for composition, while for lines, which have a continued, existence, there is not yet an agreed equivalent to the common chord. In spite, however, of this uncertainty, the eye of a good critic will discover a fault of combination in a picture, as easily as the ear of a musician will detect a false progression in harmony. We observe, in many of these cartoons, such an absence of all contrivance as would suggest the suspicion that the artist never dreamt or cared about these principles at all.

We will now, without further preparation, commence what we believe to be a just—what we know to be an unbiassed—estimate of these productions:—

No. 1. "The Baptism of Ethelbert." W. B. Spence. A name to us entirely new. This cartoon has fewer positive disqualifications than most. The drawing evinces considerable attainment in anatomical correctness, and the heads and extremities have been carefully studied. There is a deficiency in breadth and a meanness of character in the model, which probably arises from some mischievous theory adopted by the artist.

No. 2. "Religion." Frederick Fortt. Also a new name to us. We have nothing to say in favor of this cartoon. It is a bad modern German-Italian production, having the appearance of a copy from a very bad impression of an early Italian print that had been retouched by an inferior artist. The heads are singularly disagreeable.

No. 5. An abstract representation of "Religion." Augustino Aglio. Drawing, altogether vulgar in model, and incorrect in detail. We regret to see attempts like this, in which there is no indication whatever to justify the hopes of the artist.

No. 8. "Religion." E. Butler Morris. Heads and hands bad—very bad; design and execution weak throughout.

No. 11. "The Spirit of Religion." J. Noel Paton. One of the successful competitors for the £200. prize. A production full of genius of a high order, presenting many faults we like to see in pictures of a young artist. It is something hard in its execution. That will mend of itself, while it compels attention to correctness of outline, for which softness is often adopted as a substitute. There is too much—far too much—detail in the anatomy, destructive to breadth. Young artists are fond of exhibiting their knowledge when they have it. It is good to have it. We observe frequent indications of refinement in the *beau idéal*; witness the male figure descending, the angels in the

upper portion of the picture, and many of the figures in the distance. The figure of the Saviour, self-supported in mid-air, is beautiful, but have we not seen it somewhere else? The principal figure reminds us too much of Westall. There are errors in perspective, in the back-ground. The figure in the chariot is much too large. The Bacchante, and, indeed, the three females, are short legged, and there is scarce room for the lower limbs of the giant with the spear. It is, notwithstanding, a work of extraordinary promise, prologue to a celebrity depending only on the artist's industry, of which the labor bestowed on this cartoon is a guarantee.

No. 14. "Justice." John Z. Bell. One of those who obtained a prize of £200. in the competition of 1843. What a falling off is here! On what principle were these two bouncing females selected for models by Mr. Bell?

No. 18. "Prince Henry and Chief Justice Gascoigne." Alexander Blackley. Very poorly conceived, and as poorly executed. A man passing blindfold before that cartoon, would know where he was, by hearing the words "old woman."

No. 20. "Chivalry." James and George Foggo. Decidedly the least objectionable production we have seen by Messrs. Foggo.

No. 23. "An Allegory of Justice" E. H. Wehnert. Clever, and full of meaning; well and agreeably told. Among much to praise, we would point out the monarch, and the warrior. If there were a difference of opinion as to the award of the judges, it might be with respect to this cartoon. Its want of success must be, in part, attributable to the heavy meanness of the child in the foreground, whose presence we cannot account for among so much that is positively good.

No. 26. "Religion." This artist has withheld his name. He was quite right. We are sorry he did not withhold his cartoon; notwithstanding a contemporary's facetious intimation that it should have had a place among the prizes.

No. 29. "Prince Henry and Chief Justice Gascoigne." R. W. Buss. Mr. Buss's forte is not history; yet, this is passably clever in composition, and in parts well drawn. We must, however, except the neck of the Prince, which is disagreeably long.

No. 32. "Baptism of Ethelbert." Joseph Severn. Obtained a prize of £100. in the competition of 1843. A failure so evident as to render detailed criticism superfluous. We would, however, notice the right hand of the boy, as the most successful representation of flesh among the frescos.

No. 35. "Religion." One of the £400. commission. John Callcott Horsley. Obtained a prize of £200. in 1843. The most remarkable for grand simplicity of composition here; purely conceived, and beautifully executed. The kneeling figure a fine specimen of nobleness and breadth. We would suggest something unpleasant in the heaviness, or rather clumsiness, of the cross in the arms of the angel. This picture we hope to see executed in color by the artist.

No. 38. Another £400. commission. William Cave Thomas. Character of drawing coarse and angular. With much that indicates this to have been a laborious effort on the part of the artist, it is, notwithstanding, a most unpleasant, ineffective picture.

No. 41. "Spirit of Chivalry." A £400. commission. Daniel Maclise, R.A. An exquisitely finished composition, full of the exuberant imagination of the artist, and drawn

with all the beauty, power, and facility for which he is so celebrated. The fault that pervades the whole is that observable in all his works; the effect is fretted into spots by a determination to make every part prominent; consequently, nothing is prominent, in the endeavour of every part to get before every part. In spite of this drawback, we agree with a contemporary, that it is "not only the grandest specimen of its class that has been seen in this country, but that we may challenge any other country to produce the like."

No. 46. "Spirit of Religion." Edward Armitage. One of the £200. prize cartoons. We have here evidence of great power in drawing, particularly in the arm and hand of the figure beneath,—as also the old man's head; but we are not interested in the principal countenances. That of Charity is mean; that of Hope is sensual. The composition has breadth of manner, without being effective or leaving a pleasing impression on the mind. We have no desire to see this picture painted.

No. 49. "The Champion of England against all comers." Edward Henry Corbould. A fine masculine composition, without a bit of feebleness; calculated to fill a compartment most effectively. Why has not Mr. Corbould contended for the prize? His sketch is here; where is the cartoon?

No. 52. "Personification of Religion." Charles Lucy. The figure of Faith is designed with some—so much ability, that we cannot excuse the same artist for a foreshortening like that of the head of Hope. The exhibition of this cartoon was an imprudence, to say the least of it.

No. 57. "Edward the Black Prince receiving the Order of the Garter." A £400. commission. C. W. Cope, A.R.A. Obtained a prize of £300. in 1843. Coarseness and heaviness is the character of the drawing. King Edward's attitude melo-dramatically conceived, and not well executed. Allowing for a certain amount of handling, of which a practised artist could not easily divest himself, we find nothing in this cartoon to justify the commission.

No. 60. "Prince Henry and Chief Justice Gascoigne." Richard Redgrave, A.R.A. Also a £400. commission. Decidedly a failure in drawing, composition, and expression; shewing the danger to an artist of venturing beyond his line. Mr. Redgrave has been very successful in sentimental pictures of familiar life. His "Broken Heart" is an exquisite specimen of refined character, of beauty, and intense truth of expression; but there is nothing masculine in his conception. He may be expected to paint an historical picture when Miss Fortescue can act King Lear.

No. 63. "Baptism of Ethelbert." Another £400. commission. William Dyce. A clever compilation from the German-Italian, in which the aim of the artist seems rather that of escaping notice than of attracting it. There is nothing to fix the attention in any part. The crowd in the gallery, in the back ground, might serve for any scriptural subject whatever. Our memory of Ethelbert himself is, that though carefully drawn in detail, he has a very long body and very short arms.

No. 66. "Justice." Robert Caunter. We must pass this without comment.

No. 69. "Religion." George Smith. This also we will pass.

No. 72. "Baptism of Ethelbert." Frank Howard. After having obtained a prize in the second distribution of the first exhibition, the artist is scarcely justified in obtruding this cartoon upon the public.

No. 75. "Abstract Representation of Justice." W. P. Salter. Very weak indeed.

No. 79. "Religion." S. Bendixen. Here is exhibited the consequence of taking models as they are, without selection or elevation. These females are not without their attractions, yet can scarcely be considered fitting representatives of the Old and New Testament, or religion. Mr. Bendixen is no chicken, and should have learned this before to-day.

No. 82. "Prince Henry and Chief Justice Gascoigne." John Bridges. Obtained a prize of £100. in 1843. Contains much that is good. The composition is the best on the subject.

No. 85. "An Allegory of Justice." John Tenniel. Awarded a £200. prize. This is a very beautiful specimen in outline only, and may be considered an extraordinary effort for—as we understand—a very young artist. But why is it merely an outline? Can the terms of the announcement be considered fulfilled without some effect of light? A cartoon should, as we understand, contain all that may be done in drawing with black and white. Mere outline is but a portion—as it were, a profile—of the forms; and considerable facility may be obtained in its execution, without a guarantee of even tolerableness in rounding or shadowing. The colored sketch does not refute our suspicion that outline was adopted by the artist on prudential motives. We do not, however, regret the award, for there is much of promise in the cartoon; though the singular form of its composition,—being a garland of forms encircling an unoccupied centre,—cannot have been a matter of election, but an unforeseen accidental result; shewing a want of theoretical consideration previous to commencing his picture, only excusable in a very young artist.

No. 88. "Justice." John Marshall. Clever in the upper portion, but beneath broken in composition, with a mean character of drawing.

No. 98. "Spirit of Chivalry." Joseph West. A striking exemplification of what is bad in composition; the lines cutting each other as if they had all gone mad. For an artist of reputation, this is a singular production. Why represent chivalry by an unarmed man? When the necessary strength of armour made it too heavy to carry, chivalry evaporated of itself.

No. 95. "Justice." E. Butler Morris. This will not do.

No. 98. "An Abstract Representation of Justice." Ford M. Brown. There is so much really good in this cartoon, entangled in so much that is unaccountably *outré*, we are almost tempted to suspect the artist of insanity. The upper part, which has been repeated in the fresco specimen, contains much to praise; while the lower portion, in spite of its facility and power, leaves you uncertain whether the artist did not intend to make fun of the commission.

No. 104. "Spirit of Chivalry." Frank Howard. We wish this artist drew with something less of confidence. It might indicate so much doubt of his own conception, as would leave room to hope for improvement; which a comparison of this with his prize cartoon of 1843 does not warrant.

No. 105. "Religion." Henry Cook. Very bad.

No. 108. "Justice." John G. Waller. Principal figure tolerable; the whole simple to barrenness. The angel above, a school boy's attempt at drawing.

No. 111. "Justice." T. G. Hurlstone. The figure in the foreground, bound, is fairly drawn, though not a choice subject for Mercy to intercede for: he looks a truculent villain. The principal figure, Justice, is miserably designed.

No. 114. "Justice." William Johnston. A singular

affectation of costume, with a mean character of drawing, and a wandering, uncared-for, form of composition.

Looking back on these strictures, we find but four cartoons whose quality would justify the Commissioners in their selection:—those by Mr. Maclise and Mr. Horsley; with some correction, Mr. Paton's; and the "Champion," by Mr. Corbould. Of the remaining four commission cartoons, three are undoubted failures; the fourth, by Mr. Dyce, while it obtrudes no faults in its execution that may not be easily corrected, is quite as unobtrusive in its attractions; its subject and details being so feebly conceived, they fail entirely to interest. The finished sketch, however, as an effect of color merely, leaves a permanently agreeable impression on the mind. The two remaining prize cartoons can be looked upon more as earnest of something better to come, than as being themselves presently useful. Yet we must hesitate, even here, while noting the promises unfulfilled in the present exhibition, by those who gained prizes in 1843.

The specimens of fresco are not encouraging. Mr. Horsley's, we believe to be the best. The flesh, excepting in a hand by Mr. Severn, is never well represented; that by Mr. Maclise is a chocolate brown. We doubt that fresco can be substituted for oil, in England, where artists paint so well; certainly it is not fit for situations that permit a close examination of the picture.

These observations may seem sometimes harshly applied; but what we have written has only reference to the present exhibition. Many productions, here put down as failures, are by artists from whose pictures we have repeatedly derived both satisfaction and delight: with signal success in their peculiar styles, they can well afford to fail in that for which their previous studies and views of nature had not prepared them.

It is painful to see, at every recurring exhibition, the great number of competitors who could not, by any probability, have had the slightest chance of success. Indeed, whose very success would have been a reply in the negative to any enquiry as to the existence among us of capability for this work. Have these individuals no friends to counsel them against endeavours so hopeless; to warn them from so vain a squandering of time and pence,—by which they prove not only their hands incapable of doing, but their minds incapable of judging. For it is only where his execution has overtaken his conceiving, that anything like satisfaction in his own work begins to have existence in the artist. After that period, any advance is slow and uncertain; it being far more difficult to educate the judgment than the hand. Let these mistaken men reflect, that to be useful, something positively good, not comparatively tolerable, must be produced. 'Tis not a competition of living artists merely. Their specimens are judged with reference to the most happy productions of all known periods. Critics come armed with reminiscences of the best works of the best men; and they will not be mollified by the comparison of a bad drawing with a worse one beside it. Let them not therefore disgrace us as a nation before foreigners, by absolutely drowning the few specimens that are reasonably good, in a flood of those which are meaner—much meaner—than mediocrity.

It may be thought unfair to judge of modern art with reference to the *chef d'œuvre* of all time. Unfair or not, such has always been, is, and always will be the practice; and such judgments the artist must be prepared to encounter. He may indeed consider himself fortunate, if the faults of those works are not reproachfully referred to as beauties, and their very oversights pointed out as models for imitation.

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THE PAST CONCERT SEASON.

THE ANCIENT, PHILHARMONIC, AND ROYAL ACADEMY OF MUSIC CONCERTS.

IN casting a retrospective glance at the season just gone by, we are naturally led to consider what these concerts have done towards advancing the art. Each of them proposes a different line, to which it scrupulously adheres; and each may assist in the more perfect development of the science, if their energies are well directed; so that not only the matter performed, but the manner of performance shall be duly attended to.

The Ancient Concerts, by the very name, speak for themselves; their object is to keep alive the remembrance of the past; their avowed intention is to foster the relish of that music; which, whatever its merits when compared directly with the modern, is, nevertheless, the source from which our present system has been derived. Amid much that may be called quaint, and much that now ceases to interest, owing to the great improvement in the mechanism of instruments, having brought such vast resources to the aid of our modern composers, and accustomed our ears to greater powers of combination, there is still very much left from which great pleasure may still be derived, and if properly studied, still greater improvement may be drawn. We cannot but think that if our modern writers referred themselves more often to the treasures of ancient musical lore, we should have a more simple, pleasing, and graceful style of writing.

Few of the composers of the day seem to possess the powers of imagination necessary to originate fresh combinations. They are like the new verse-making machine,—they write by rule: like the said machine, almost all assume one form: but unlike the machine, whose essence is simplicity in the construction of its phrases, they plunge headlong into all manner of abstruse combinations, written only because they can be written; and consequently—although a vast amount of matter may be yearly produced—there is but little that will stand the test of even ordinary criticism. Their ideas, so far from assuming harmonious combinations, seem more adapted to keep the nervous system of the audience on the rack, dreading some fresh ingenious torture of possible discords, ere the final close relieves the awakened apprehension.

The range of music produced this season, has been rather extensive; taking in an interval of about 300 years, that is, from the year 1520 to the beginning of the present century. The writings of the greatest masters have formed the staple.—Handel, Gluck, Haydn, Mozart and Beethoven. Colossal emblems of this art Divine! But there are other names which, though not so well known, are yet interesting from the fact that they were the models from whom these great writers drew their own resources. If Handel has studied Carissimi and Stradella,—Mozart and Gluck, Martini,—Haydn, Porpora—and Beethoven, Haydn; is it not interesting, to a real lover of music, to hear the works of those whose writings form the basis on which so splendid a superstructure has been raised? Can it fail to prove instructive to trace thus the progress of the art? And it is only here where we have any chance of hearing the early writers. Yet, but for these concerts, venerable alike for their antiquity and their associations, the ancient classic school would be blotted out from all recollection. Let

us not then be supposed to carry our enthusiasm too far, if we say what we feel:—that their loss would be irreparable.

It is not our purpose to enter into the origin and progress of these concerts, which have now been in existence nearly seventy years, as these details have often been given before. We will merely say that they are established under the auspices of Royal and noble directors; whose selections, in most cases, have been well and judiciously made; and if some have a predilection for hearing over and over, and year after year, the same things, we must pass silently by the amiable taste that prompts the ear to hanker after old associations. In one respect, however, a great stride has been made, within the last few years, to keep up the character of the concerts: that is, by searching more into the ancient stores of art, and extracting from thence much that has afforded both pleasure and instruction. We can only hope that these laudable exertions will be continued with increased energy.

With regard to the performance itself, we are compelled to say that, if the directors wish to support that credit they now have in public estimation, it behoves them to pay more attention to this department; for, to speak the truth, if, in some few cases, the execution of the band and chorus has not been marked by any very great defect, that is the greatest amount of praise that can conscientiously be given. On most occasions, however, not only the choral and instrumental pieces, but even the concerted pieces were executed in a negligent manner, without any attention whatever to the effects of light and shade, or even of ordinary precision: and, generally speaking, the vocal music was overwhelmed by the accompaniment. It would, perhaps, be unjust to lay all the blame on the conductor; for English orchestras are not, generally, composed of controllable materials; and yet we think more decision on his part would lead to better results. Again, we must bear in mind that there is but one rehearsal,—and this carried on before a regular audience, who pay high for their admission and, consequently, expect something for their money. This may be the reason why many defects are heard at the concerts, which might have been remedied were the rehearsal private; but which are suffered to pass without correction for fear of interrupting the current of the performance. It is true that to find fault is easy; but the character of the concerts is at stake, and the public who are now taking more interest in them, may not, perhaps, patiently continue their patronage when the music, not only interesting in itself, but instructive to the intelligent hearer, is marred by negligence and carelessness of performance.

In summing up our observations of these concerts, we must observe that the accompaniment to the vocal music of the early writers is exceedingly simple, as may be inferred from the limited nature of the instruments then in use. What then must be the surprise of any one anxious to hear these compositions with something of their original simplicity, to find them in most cases overpowered by a blast of brass instruments, so loud that the hapless author is often lost in a roar of sound? To whose taste we are indebted for this we do not know. We can only hope that the directors will, ere long, feel and remedy this braying evil.

Summary of Composers, produced this season, arranged in most cases according to birth, but in some from the date of their works.

XVI. CENTURY.

Soto di Puebla, 1520 Laudi Spirituali G. Echart.

XVII. CENTURY.

E. del Cavaliere	Stradella	Marcello
F. Greaves	Handel	L. Vinci
Bennett	S. Bach	Leo.

XVIII. CENTURY.

Graun	Dr. Cooke	Cherubini
Pergolesi	Sacchini	S. Mayer
Martini	Porta	Mehul
Gluck	Nauman	Weigl
E. Bach	Paisiello	Himmel
Caldara	Webbe	Zanotti
Guglielmi	Cimarosa	Beethoven
Earl of Mornington	Zingarelli	Paer
Millico	Winter	Seyfried
Sarti	Mozart	Hummel
Haydn	Rhigini	Schneider.

We turn now to the Philharmonic Concerts, the object, in this case, was originally to create a taste in this country for instrumental music. At their first institution, the performance was altogether instrumental, without any assistance from the charms of vocal music; this was subsequently introduced, and now forms a principal feature, as a relief, after long and sometimes tedious orchestral pieces; Symphonies, overtures, and concertos form the groundwork of these concerts. Their sphere, therefore, may be considered as in some degree limited,—at least we must suppose so,—or otherwise we should not hear, year after year, the same things repeated, until they almost cease to interest.

The object, we have said, is to bring forward instrumental compositions, and, we suppose, the intention is, that they may be produced in the best possible manner, with all the advantage of perfect execution; but what is really the case,—notwithstanding the boast by the orchestra of its own excellence, the performance—so far from assisting and making prominent the beauties of the composition—in many cases crushes the composer's efforts. There is no unity of purpose,—each player appears to play for himself—and the result, therefore, may be more easily conceived than described. The beautiful effect of the dolce, which, like the neutral tint in painting, ought to blend the piano and forte, and harmonize the whole, seems to be not even understood. It is thought sufficient to be very soft or very loud,—the last generally most predominant,—from the overpowering effects of which, not only the composer, but the concerto player and vocalist alike suffer. A change was made, some little time ago, in the conductorship, and since a little improvement of details has taken place, but the grand conceptions of the great composers, require a mind of greater grasp than any that of late years has had the control of the Philharmonic orchestral powers. The attempts now made, are like those of an inferior actor, endeavouring to embody the language of Shakspeare, his incapacity for the task being only made more apparent, by his struggles to produce some effect; by chance, he may read aright, but, as to a perfect representation of the author's mind, the attempt proves abortive; thus, these concerts are far from proving so attractive as they ought to be. There are no novelties, and advantage is not taken to vary the programmes from the resources they possess.

The solo players who have been introduced this season, certainly form an array of talent not easily to be surpassed; and every credit is due to the exertions of the

directors in this department; although the music they have displayed their powers in, when, as in some cases, the performer's own composition, was beneath criticism.

We subjoin a list of the names of the artists:—

PIANO.	VIOLIN.	CLARINET.
Mrs. Anderson	Sainton	Blaes Meerti
Mad. Dulcken	Vieuxtemps	Cavallini
Mad. Oury	Sivori	—
W. S. Bennett	The two Milanollos	HARP.
L. de Meyer	Master Day	Godefroid.
Moscheles.		

The Concerts of the Royal Academy of Music, next claim our attention. It will always be our endeavour to uphold this Institution, as far as lies in our power, not only for the intrinsic good it does, but also because we are sorry to find that it has been subject to many unjust attacks, from the prejudices which some people seem to entertain against it. Surely, nothing can be more unfair and unjust than to allow personal pique to influence a question of the advance of an art—for what but some pique could be guilty of such injustice! It may be said that defects exist in the administration,—we would ask, what administration is free from defect?—But what can that possibly have to do with the talent that is produced? The public are much indebted to this Institution, for the introduction of a higher and better standard of musical education in this country. Previous to its establishment, those who wished to devote themselves to music, generally got their education in an irregular manner;—sometimes they were bound to professors, a dead weight which they seldom shook off,—we speak in a pecuniary point of view,—as the sum demanded for only one branch of the art, was what few could pay. But, since the foundation of this Institution, by a regular system of musical education, the rudiments are much better understood; and we are not surprised that prejudices should exist among some of the old school, whose scholastic powers are surpassed by the superior knowledge of the principles and practice of the art, which has now been developed.

The concerts of this year, four in number, present no very marked features as regards the music produced:—the names of great composers are very often found in the programmes, so that no exception can be taken on that score. But these concerts being intended to introduce the rising talent to the public, we must consider what expectations have been raised by any of the pupils who have been brought forward. Among the Vocalists who give promise of future excellence, we may rank Misses Barrett, Davies, D'Ernst, Duval, Hill, Messent, and A. Romer, and Messrs. Bodda and Wetherbee; of violin players—Messrs. Hill and Symmonds, particularly the former; on the violoncello—Mr. Chipp, in point of tone, equal to any player of the day; on the flute—Mr. Wells; and on the piano—Miss Read and Mr. Noble. Having thus selected fifteen, out of about twenty-six who have appeared this year, it is only doing justice to the Institution to say, that, according to the means it possesses, it has fulfilled its intention, and has shewn that there exists a considerable amount of talent, which ought to create a sensation in the musical world. But one thing seems inexplicable,—how is it that out of many who can be thus produced, as shewing signs of future promise, so few realize the expectation. If we look back to the past history of the Institution, it is the same; we find, from the very first, perhaps even greater promise, and yet how

few are heard of again. As long as they are students, they do well and progress; as soon as they leave,—with but a rare exception now and then,—they sink into the ranks of mediocrity, and there seem content to linger out their existence. It is clear that this is out of the power of the Institution to remedy: there is some under current at work which prevents the onward progress; and we fear that the want of mental culture must have some weight in the balance. There may be also, a want of that delicate sensibility, which always renders the possessor unable to sit down patiently under the pressure of implied inability, and thus stimulates to exertions which must end in success. If so, we can only say that no excellence can be attained, but by slow and pains taking perseverance; and where these are wanting, however good the soil, it will only bring forth weeds.

In speaking of the executive part—namely, the band and chorus—we observe that a great improvement has taken place lately, particularly in the choral department, we do sometimes hear that soft vocal whispering which possesses, in itself, an indescribable charm—that blending of all the voices together, both in the softer and louder parts, that—as far as our experience goes—we look for in vain elsewhere. The credit of this must be given to the conductor, Mr. Lucas, upon whom devolves the difficult task of keeping in subordination the erratic disposition of youth.

Having thus given a glance at the concerts of the past season, which we conceive to be more immediately connected with music as a science; in a few words we will sum up what we think each has done for the advance of the art.—Of the Ancients then, we say that, as far as the production of music, they deserve much credit for their exertions in bringing forward the ancient school,—its only solid foundation—but, as to the performance, it can claim but little praise. Of the Philharmonic—the solo players have been their great attraction this year; but the Royal Academy of Music has fulfilled its purpose,—it has brought forward talent in the pupils,—and the performance reflects great credit on the exertions of all to whom this department has been entrusted.

BENEFIT CONCERTS.

At the season of the year just passed, when every description of amusement that could attract is prominently paraded,—when the Opera, the Theatres, and exhibitions, horticultural and floricultural fêtes, form a phalanx of allurements not to be easily withstood, in addition to all with which the metropolis abounds, we find announcements in the various papers of concerts given by individuals, in general including a formidable array of performers and performances; categorically considered, they may be placed under one general term,—Benefit Concerts. Some persons are apt to view these in an unfavorable manner, conceiving naturally enough, that they are not in any way calculated to advance the art; but are merely, like many other speculations, ingenious devices to fill the pockets of those under whose names they are given. That this description of concert, particularly when undertaken by artists, who have a reputation, does certainly answer the pecuniary purpose wonderfully well, there can be no doubt in the mind of any one who has been in the habit of attending them. Not only are the rooms filled,—they are positively crammed. Any one who, by dint of perseverance, has contrived to squeeze into the interior of the assembled audience, is no longer master of his actions; he is “cabin'd cribb'd, confined,” and it becomes a matter of difficulty to retrace the

too rashly intruded steps. That these concerts do not advance the art in any way, we are disposed to admit,—that the system may be subject to abuse, there can be no doubt; but, if amidst the chaos of contending opinions one bright spot serenely shines, we should be sorry to see them swept away altogether, if for the sake of that bright spot alone. We allude to the fact that in many instances they have been the means of first introducing into the world some, whose talents might otherwise have for ever languished and pined away in obscurity; we perhaps may be excused if we venture, in the matter, to institute a simile between them and our poor lost rotten boroughs;—those bulwarks of the constitution, now irrevocably gone. We lamented the day that consigned them to oblivion, and blotted them from out the page of English history. They sprung up in troublous times, and formed the first nucleus of popular representation; they had grown up with our growth, and though theoretically they might have been rotten, practically they worked well; and we have gained nothing, if we have not indeed lost by their loss; through which many an aspiring man may even now be shut out from ever exercising a useful sphere in his country's cause. Thus it is with Benefit Concerts, like the old borough system, they may be nothing but mercenary speculations; they may be inveighed against as containing some vitiating principles; yet they often are the only chance which many a rising artist has of opening before him a career of future success. Those who are not versed in these matters, little know the difficulties which beset a young beginner here. On the continent there are many more prospects than we possess in this country. The opera here is shut to English artists; our national theatres are but a limited sphere; the regular established concerts will, for the most part, only engage well known names: and even, at all these Foreigners without the pretensions which many English artists possess, gain admittance more easily than the denizens of this country. And thus, with the single exception of the Royal Academy of Music, which is the only place where young musicians have any chance of an introduction—and were it only for this, it ought to be patronized by all who wish to advance native talent—there is no opening for aspiring youth, but at a Benefit Concert. And many an individual, now high in public estimation, may trace his rise and progress to the chance thus afforded of a first appearance before the public.

We have said that abuses do exist; but no system is free from them. Our chief objection to them is the interminable bill of fare, varying generally of from 30 to 40 "*pieces de resistance*," as our lively neighbours term them, which it seems, like the ponderous joints of beef we delight in, are necessary to constitute an Englishman's idea of satisfaction. We conceive at this rate of estimation, it would prove more attractive generally, if two concerts, namely,—a Morning and an Evening concert could be jumbled together. This musical union, beginning at about 2 o'clock, might be stated to last till midnight, thereby giving an opportunity to many to go home, dine, and return to finish the evening. We throw this out merely as a hint, and shall not be surprised in the ensuing season to find it acted on. C. J.

THE FINE ARTS IN RUSSIA.—The Imperial Academy of fine arts at St. Petersburg will open at the end of September, with an exhibition of paintings and drawings, to which the works of foreign artists will be admitted. They will be received until August 31st, and on the 8th of September a Committee is appointed to examine the works.

THE TRACEDIAN.

"When Roscius was an actor at Rome."

THERE is no art, the existence and encouragement of which requires the attainment of a certain degree of civilization and refinement, that has received less assistance from the after progress of that refinement, than acting. There is no profession that can derive less advantage from instruction, or can less avail itself of the experience obtainable from age to age, than that which undertakes to give appropriate articulation, expression, and action to the incidents, sentiments, and passions portrayed in words by the dramatist or play writer.

In this art we can trace no progress or sign of growing improvement, and can produce no evidence from the observation of our own time to refute the assertion, (should some whole-hog worshipper of the divinities of antiquity be bold enough to hazard it,) that this same Roscius, the actor at Rome, was as good, or even better, than any that have bowed to the plaudits of a modern theatre.

All other arts show some marked symptoms of infancy, childhood, and *adolescence*; then go on accumulating knowledge of the steepness and difficulty of the path they have to climb; but acting has no youth, and shows no sign of added power. We are not speaking of the actor, but the art. Not of the germe that is latent in the man, till accident shall give it life, but of the promise of the time; the indications that give notice of a coming crop. Remuneration and distinction such as it receives, showered upon other professions, would be responded to, by increasing number and excellence in their members; but no added bounty, however liberal, no honorable notice, of which we have conception, can add to the drama's strength one actor worth enlisting, who would not have been a volunteer, had that extraordinary bounty been withheld, and that honorable distinction been substituted by the opprobrium to which the profession has been ere now subjected. Almost the only article, in this manufacturing community, that cannot be made to order, is a good actor. He is an accidental amalgamation; a chance meeting of strange elements. He seems distinct from cause and effect. His coming has no prologue. We watch no Tubal swelling into Shylock, no Richmond that gives hope of a new Richard. We mark no Macbeth in the bud. When least expected the matured tragedian starts forth, full armed from top to toe, perfect as an emanation from the mind of Jove. Nought less will pass unscathed the ordeal he challenges; where, if he fails, he falls among the crowd that failed before him, hopeless of a new trial, with a jury from whose judgment there is no appeal. His obscure apprenticeship has been passed, not merely learning how to act, but what. The fire within has but waited to know the range in which it shall have leave to burn the fiercest. Within its limits he is all we can desire; more, much more than we can conceive; far, far beyond what we can describe. Within that range we do not criticize, we wonder. If at some time we may detect a beauty, among other beauties not so beautiful, our standard was his own creation, and we but compare him with himself.

The old moth Time preys, stealthy but sure, on all those qualities that made his fitness for the niche he fills. Those parts of him that were our pride, assume each year a fainter prominence. The eye of fire, and the firm tread, the proud bearing, and the "big manly voice," are no longer as we once knew them. Still we love him for the memory we

have; and still we find in him the only true reminder of his former self. His mimic-life is o'er, and the dark drapery that screens him from our sight has severed every bond that once united us. He who had, at his own will, the cunning so to mesmerise our senses that they were his serfs, is gone, and "like the baseless fabric of a vision, leaves not a wreck behind." His mantle descends on no one, for its folds sit gracefully on none but him. What seed for fame he sowed has been that flung among his audience, and it exacts an organization in nothing different from his own, to bring that seed to fruit. However deep the reminiscence of his excellence may have been stamped on his admirers' minds, the capacity of conveying the impression to others, exists but in the actor himself.

He looks to no after time for recompense. His price, whether in fame or money, has been paid at once. The public owe him nothing. No accumulation has been left for futurity to settle. The approving shout echoed his triumph, as the loud thunder follows the flash of light. The account was balanced on the spot, and each party left, satisfied with the traffic that had passed between them. Posterity has no debt to liquidate, and knows him not at all.

The successful writer of his time leaves his impress on his times' literature. The leading writer of his age rebels at once against all those observances before considered sanctified in letters; gives to thought fresh impulse, and opens new regions of the mind to speculative search; yet, after all, is but himself, the effect of causes difficult to trace. Not so the actor—he has nought to do with his period, nor his period with him. Pope, Johnson, Scott, and Byron, have each their existing schools; their footsteps left a shape not yet obliterated by the passing crowd; but Barry, Betterton, Quin, and Garrick, have left no trail to show the fashion of their gait. And if they had, experience so gained would have availed us little. The only rock on which to rear the superstructure of dramatic eminence, is originality of execution. 'Tis that alone that elevates the artist from the mediocrity by which he is environed. Distinct enunciation, graceful action, correct declamation, and an understanding of the author an accomplished scholar might be vain of, are all as nothing without that stern reliance upon self, which scorning the blind influence of what has been, looks but to the light within for aid in its creations. Having that, he may "so force his soul into his own conceit, that by her working all his visage wanes," the conceit of any other his soul will not enter. No plagiarist on the stage can give the true mint stamp to passion; he is but the copier of a copy; the imitator of an imitation; the most successful effort being but an attempt to embody the great model existing in its fulness only in the fancy itself; for none was ever yet endued with physical intensity to show all that his mind had pictured.

Some, who affect to look upon the stage and acting as a pursuit for triflers only, may think I estimate too highly the qualities that are wanting for this art. It is an idle speculation to rank professions, and to compare this pursuit with that, unless possession of capacity for the one ensured the power to obtain distinction in the other; but in all the various ways in which celebrity is attainable among our fellow men, we notice, that to do one thing well, it is not necessary to possess any other fitness but for that, whether an operation of the mind or body. It is a mere prejudice, inculcated by literary men themselves, that high literary

talent, or the mere power of describing vividly in words the ideas presenting themselves to the mind is the chief test of man's intellectual eminence. Examine this dogma closely, and we find the faculty possessed, eminently possessed, without the fellowship of any other that is respectable; and almost universally confined to some narrow vein of thought. The poet is seldom fit to cope with any of the certain sciences—while he who gains celebrity in those, treats all that is merely imaginative with contempt or indifference. Why? Is it only because his philosophic mind is absorbed by the lofty contemplation of abstruse truth, that he cannot descend to the trifling of ideal composition? Has he the choice of doing so, would he but stoop? Not he. The philosopher is, in most cases, as incapable of producing the work of fiction as is the poet or novelist of disentangling the sophistries of Malthus or Ricardo. The fitness for the one no more includes capacity for the other, than the singing of Malabran includes the dancing of Taglioni.

Then why reserve our veneration, exclusively, for those qualities that bring their owner before the public as an author? It is as difficult in this age of printing, to discover a good bootmaker or a good tailor, as an eminent bookmaker. (We do not remember having had more than one pair of boots that fitted satisfactorily—they were Hessians. That was a pair of boots!!! "In our mind's eye, Horatio," we see them now.) Every one knows that either of these operatives is in a much plainer road to fortune than either the philosopher or the poet. Yet, whisper to Nugee or Stultz, descending from his cab, that he is not gifted with ability to make a book, and he will feel the insinuation to be an insult; but reproach the poet aloud, and in society, with not having a capacity for making shoes, and he will bow as to a compliment. Is not this a prejudice, founded on the power possessed by the literary portion of the community, from their mere positions, of fostering and giving publicity and perpetuity to those opinions that flatter their self-love.

But, inasmuch as the mere power to act includes but that, so, no other power includes the power to act. The strong man has not of a surety a loud voice; neither are the arms of a dancer always muscular; and the endowments of a tragedian, however rare it may be to find them congregated in one individual, do not of themselves indicate facilities for any thing but tragedy. Aye, and inasmuch as any considerable poetic fancy would but beguile the mind from studies more abstruse, so the powers of the actor increase in intensity, in a ratio with the diminution of the range over which those powers are diffused. The peculiar fitness for certain characters being of itself peculiar unfitness for others, their opposites. This is the certificate of genius, not only on the stage, but in all the denominations under which the human mind has classified its pursuits, "Jack of all trades, and master of none," it is the gift of mediocrity only to be versatile. This is why your genius is the worst horse in the stable to plough with. Out of his narrow sphere he is not only useless, he is mischievous. The consciousness of power beyond his fellows in some thing, gives confidence in all, and does, at times and seasons, cause such pranks as "make heaven weep, all earth amazed." Thus your actor who pretends to greatness and versatility is a cheat. Believe him not. He who is equally effective in opposite lines of character cannot possess high qualities for any. The mere physical fitness for the one, is exclusion from the rest; eminence in all being impossible.

The sole example of being in all things great is pointed to in Garrick. This now is but tradition, and no other actor can hope his fame to benefit by such adventitious associations as those accompanying our ideas of little David. We know him, now, more as the friend and scholar of that lettered mammoth, Samuel Johnson, and the boon companion of Reynolds, Goldsmith, and a knot of other worthies, in whose company his name will go to latest time, than in his own character of an actor. 'Tis this association that has obtained for him an eminence, a sober scrutiny of contemporaneous criticism will not satisfactorily maintain: and while it would be idle to dispute his claim of having played a great variety of characters well, there is no strong reason for asserting he reigned paramount in any, unless where his excellence was less positive than comparative; more owing to the absence of competition than his own sufficiency. As for playing tolerably, out of his line, the mere usages of the stage would make an accomplished actor tolerable in anything, to the crowd. The more he seems to them to act, the more they like his acting. But to him who is used to triumph, respectability is a failure. The Kean was respectable in Able Druggier, and the wise critics of the time pronounced his acting to be too fine to laugh at; but he soon learned that frenzied shouts, like those extorted by the passages for which his temperament most fitted him, were hopeless in such foolery. On one memorable occasion he forgot this lesson, and some mistaken friend compiled a drama, in which his various gifts were to be reviewed at once. This most absurd of all absurdities exhibited the child of passion as a poor player on the piano-forte, an indifferent singer, a bad fencer, and finished with a hornpipe, in which he sprained, or feigned to sprain, his ankle! So much for versatility. Poor Kean was not alone in such hallucination. Catalani exhibited herself in a shawl dance, in rivalry to Parrisot, Liston tried it on in Romeo, Charles Young in Captain Macheath, and John Kemble proved himself to be a bad singer in Lord Aimwell.

Let the actor, who possesses *matériel* for being great in any, condense his energies, to perfecting those few parts in which his fitnesses have their greatest scope. He can then afford to say of anything beyond, "That character I cannot play." When Edmund Kean, in his best time electrified the London play-goers in the range of parts for which he seemed contrived, how omnipotent was the charm in which he held the silent crowd that listened, and how loud the shout that followed each master touch on their excited senses! But how narrow was that range! What words can designate the wide interval between John Kemble and Edmund Kean! both excellent, each absolute in his own realm of passion, and each but tolerable when trespassing on the dominion of his great rival.

"What words can designate?"—Aye, "there's the rub." No words can raise a symbol in the mind, of an embodiment containing all that meet to make the riches of one small line in Shakspeare, in that moment when self has been forgotten by the actor, and he feels within only the mighty inspiration of the poet. Thus we ancient men that have sat entranced while Siddons, and O'Neile, George Frederic Cooke, John Philip Kemble, and Edmund Kean, have held us spell-bound, are twitted by the young fry, that have since grown up around us, for that we do not back our idolatry with evidence, or give reflection to those miracles on which our faith is founded. We dare not, and they doubt. We will not be cajoled to caricature the great gone-by to mollify their scepticism—but again, we tell these

ignorant juveniles in the lump, there is no vestige on the boards of Siddons, Kemble, or Kean. We are not measuring their proportions with those of any living actor. We speak not of comparative approachings to perfection, but of style. Of that individuality of manner, caused by the proportional conjunction of certain mental and physical endowments in the artist, producing, or rather compelling, originality of execution. The tragedian of this our time, and there is but one, owes as little to these I speak of as they were indebted to those before before them, or to each other. Nay, perhaps he carries this proud quality to an excess that is some taint upon that purity of purpose with which the heroes of Shakspeare should be approached. Do we not at times suspect a point to be passed by unmarked, (not misunderstood or overlooked), because, already popularly recognized as done before, and he will not tread in the worn print of another's footsteps? But no single mortal can lay bare to common intellect the rich mines of love, and hate, and fear, and pride, and every other sentiment that can motive human action, which are spread beneath the surface, in our country's dramatist; and where tradition can be had it should be used. Bring each passage to the mind's tribunal and judge it by its merits. If it survive the test the actor has no more right to pass that passage carelessly than he has to change the author's text. He who illuminates some treasure yet concealed, and makes distinct to average perception, a shade of sentiment, till then in misty dimness, has "done the state some service;" while he who passes by established meanings unexamined, does a wrong originality will not excuse.

What a noble volume would that be, that should contain the various interpretations, by successive actors, of the mind's philosophy, with which each page of our great bard is pregnant. Those are the only illustrations that would be worthy of the poet. The quiet, cozy, self-applauded cogitations of the scholar, with his feet upon the hobs, no matter what his reputation, can be but "leather and prunella," compared with what he finds, whose life is spent in aiming to give tone and expression to the words he knows by heart. His labours are not directed to the mere resuscitation of obsolete terms, but to penetrate the soul of the supposed speaker, and make the feelings he finds there his own. He looks not into words for their hack meanings only, but in their combination with the mood of the utterer traces a germe of thought, that gives conclusion to a sentiment, conveyable to others, only by the just combination with which the passage is to be voiced and looked.

Are we then wrong, to rate those qualities so highly, that are so seldom found, while we have no other scale by which to estimate nature's nobility, but the degree of rarity in which her favors have been bestowed among us? In this art the rarity receives no aid from any thing repulsive in the study. There is no mental craving, that we know, more general than the desire to act, no feeling more common to all stations, than the wish to escape from the common-place of every day life, by putting on for a brief space the borrowed garments of ideality. Princes have doffed their ermine to exchange their cumbrous dignity for the rude familiar courtesies of the peasant. Nay,

"The very snob goes to it,
And the small printer's devil gags in our presence."

Then, prejudice avaunt! We say at once the sole cause of rarity is this—the tragedian demands possession of qualities more rare to congregate, than any other art we know.

In him must meet perception, to receive the thought his author would convey, with the physical capability to transfer his own conceiving to his audience. His is the single profession insisting on combined endowments from body and from mind. Literature! pshaw! Boz might have had a hump, Harry Lorrequer's two legs might have been constructed on the principle of De Ville's callipers, without subtracting one tittle from their well deserved popularity; and the writers in *Punch* would not have been less funny, had there been but one nose among the lot of them. What is it to us whether Maclise is or is not a good looking fellow? Bell, the leader of the Chancery bar, had a short leg and stuttered; Irving, the popular preacher, squinted fearfully; all Lord Brougham's mental resources would have left him to wag his nose in low comedy all his life, and we ourselves, with a theoretical profundity in the art, that must have already confounded our readers, are baffled from the boards by repeated observation that (owing to a certain pleasantness of countenance inherited from our maternal parent,) the hilarity of our audience is rather increasing than otherwise, whilst we are perspiring in an intensity of pathos.

To be merely tolerable on the stage in tragedy, requires a voice of power, distinct utterance of the author's words, a plain declamation, not frequent either at the bar, pulpit, or senate, and a pronunciation free from city or provincial peculiarity. How few we notice in society possessed of even these advantages.

To be merely tolerable on the stage in tragedy, the person must have at least escaped all blemishes that have a name, or tend too much to individualize the actor's self; the consciousness of which becomes an ever-present clog on that full confidence in his audience, which is the key-stone of his influence over their fancy. Even a supernumerary in a procession has been unnerved by observations on his smelling organ.

To be merely tolerable on the stage in tragedy, the features, voice, and limbs, must have such freedom, that all tone, action, and expression, can be varied at the mere bidding of the mind that regulates their use.

These qualities, after all, but indicate the power to do, if well directed. The judgment of the what, and where, and how, and when, makes the next step,—the respectable, the clever actor; he who satisfies the mind with correct reading, graceful, appropriate action; one in whose personation all parts are studied, cared for; all in good keeping; where the mere critic seeks in vain for some unguarded point to thrust his pen. Yet is he still but as the statue, waiting the Promethean fire that animates to excellence; that which raises some small faculty to consequence, and calls it genius; the ardour that would aim at what to others seems impossible; the nervousness that gives the artist discontent with his best efforts; the intensity of thought and muscle that still struggles to overcome all physical resistance to his soul's meaning; the emulative energy that would still outdo all that itself has done; the crowning faculty of all, the steam that sets the whole in motion—a temperament of sufficient nerve to task the execution of these qualities to their utmost stretch.

This is the element infused in all who shew exceeding fitness for any mental superintendence over physical action, and bestows the power to concentrate the entire intellect, especially to the attainment of one object. 'Tis the inspiration which bestows on the tragedian a divine right to dominate over the multitude before him. By it, he plays

upon their passions, as if they were his puppets, and he held the cord that moved them. By it, he elicits as he lists, their tearful grief, their pallid fear, and—dearest to him of all—their electric shout of approbation.

Let those who would decry the stage, and would depreciate the actor's rank among the talent of the land, examine carefully the eminent in all professions that we know, and point out one among them all in whom he notes this combination of Nature's gifts, mental and physical; the difficulty to find that one, if he succeeds at all, will raise his estimate of the tragic actor to an equality with the proudest.

THE TRUNK MAKER.

CLASS SINGING.

In these days of doing every thing at railroad speed when people have scarcely time even to live—that is to live in a calm and rational manner—when those who wish to acquire knowledge and information, are not content with the old fashioned way of making a beginning, and after having laid a solid foundation, raise thereon a superstructure which will defy the scrutiny of an envious world, but wish all at once to plunge in *medias res*, and catch open-mouthed everything that falls in their way,—when young gentlemen and ladies, scarce out of their leading-strings, lisp out their ideas,—and with some assurance too,—on all arts and sciences—"Music, Painting, Poetry, Hydrostatics, Political Economy, Transcendentalism, and all the arcana of the Intuitive Philosophy," it is not to be wondered at that people should be found, whose object is to meet this growing taste halfway, by raising up systems just calculated to take an unwary public, whose wish is to pick up something in the smallest possible space of time, and at least cost of money. If we look at the announcements in the daily papers, we shall find hand books constantly coming forth, hot pressed and cheap, on every subject which it is possible for the mind of man to conceive. Amidst then, such a rush after easy and expeditious attainment of knowledge, and consequent offers on the part of others of easily and expeditiously imparting that knowledge, it need not surprise any one that so delightful a science as music should have its high priests and votaries. As part of this system, within the last few years, has sprung up what is called class singing; a process of teaching and learning this most difficult of all the branches of music, in a mode not only expeditious, but beyond measure cheap,—that is in comparison with the usual price demanded by professors. Turn we now to those whose names stand most conspicuous in this department, Wilhem, Mainzer, Hullah! Glorious representatives of this magic art!

A few years ago the whole town was taken by storm, as it were, by the sudden irruption of this wholesale system of musical education, which, in a short time, was to enlighten the present generation, in all the arcana of the science, without any more trouble than an occasional attendance *en masse*. And this system not only infected the whole of this vast metropolis, but the contagion spread far and wide into the country. The Council of Education, by their high sanction, were partly the cause of this popular infatuation; but we believe the innocent cause,—for it nowhere appears that they intended to establish in this manner a plan of regular instruction in music or singing,—but more, if not altogether, with the view of introducing among the middling and lower classes of this country, a taste for more rational enjoyment, than could be hoped for within the precincts of public houses; and thereby engen-

dering a more orderly and decent attention to the moralities of domestic life. With such views, the undertaking assumed a high and dignified character. No sooner, however, was the system recommended and established, than the upper classes of society, thinking that a short and certainly cheap cut had been discovered to a knowledge of this agreeable science, flocked to metropolitan meetings in numbers. The country also took up the infection, and the whole nation seemed eager to add to the music of the spheres. Singing classes were formed in all directions, every room was forthwith seized upon by some certified professor or other, and enlisted into the service; for a short time all were pleased and delighted; the novelty of the thing no doubt giving it a zest. Soon, however, a change came over the scene; for after an attendance at a course or two of these classes, people began to discover that they knew no more than when they first commenced. At length the simple truth forced itself upon them,—that whatever purposes it might answer as a mere plan of educational policy for the people at large—as a system for imparting any instruction, it was utterly useless. Gradually the classes disappeared. The frequent announcement of large, and tumultuously congregated, assemblies to take place, has now dwindled down to one great choral meeting in the year. Shades of departed noises! Where are ye?

One great choral meeting is now the end of all this annual labor;—one solitary assembly for exercising the pulmonic powers of the metropolitan multitude. It was announced this year, and took place on the evening of June 4th. It will be needless to enter into any minute detail; suffice it say that so far from shewing the efficacy of the system, this display only confirmed our previous opinion on the subject, namely,—that the great body of the singers know nothing about the matter; but persons who can sing are placed at distances, these take up the points, and the others at length join in by degrees, until, like a pack of hounds, they all get into full cry. If people find any amusement in attending, we have nothing to urge against so innocent a pastime: to them we would say, "Cease not your funning," we would not deprive you of the healthful recreation.

But we turn now to what we conceive a more serious part of the affair, namely,—the issue of certificates by the professor, at the rate of ten guineas a piece, as a qualification to teach according to the system approved of by the Council of Education; a system not originated even, but taken up second hand, by the professor himself; certificates in many cases given to persons, who subsequently turned out little qualified for the purpose; when the only thing required for these was a mere attendance upon a course or two of classes, and in many cases none at all. The matter then, we say, assumed a more serious aspect, and might, perhaps, have been called in question by the higher powers. It did not, however, require any interference from other quarters,—the system was weighed in the balance and found wanting. The public soon found they learnt nothing, and professors discovered that certificates were not necessary, merely to amuse the public; and consequently it has been gradually sinking into that negative state of existence, from which perhaps it may descend into total oblivion; although we should be sorry that this should be the case, if the purpose originally intended be at all answered by it,—that of giving a more rational tone to the amusements of the people.

In proof of what we have advanced, we will add, that

although it has only been lately introduced into this country, class singing has been long known on the continent. Now if there was any good in it—if any advantage could really have been derived from it—the conservatories abroad would surely all, if not, some at least, have adopted it. But what is the case, in no one instance has it ever been introduced. The Royal Academy of Music, in this country did, we believe, try the experiment for a short time; but so far from improving, as far as we can learn, after two years trial, they found that the choral department was worse than under the old regime, to which it has again returned; thus evidently shewing what we have stated above, that as a system, by which any real instruction, or even practical good, can be imparted, it has no shadow of a claim upon which it can rest.

W.

THE DRAMA.

We have passed a London season without the occurrence of one attempt to represent the legitimate Drama, at either of our principal theatres; for we can no more allow the production of *Antigone* to be the legitimate Drama of our period in England, than the sling of David, or the bow and arrows of a Cherokee to be the efficient weapons of a soldier of the nineteenth century in Europe. While the paltry experiment of producing Mr. Betty in Shakspeare's heroes, supported by the raff of the minor theatres, seemed almost the invention of an alien to put a tombstone on tragedy for ever as a thing that was. We have seen the temple where Kemble and Siddons vouchsafed to share with us their inspirations, stuffed with chintzes, bagmen, and cast-iron; alternating its echoes between Cobden, Bright, and the rock harmonicon. Good, persuadable Sir Robert, for the sake of our divine bard, grant at once the desires of these men, and let the Drama have its own again. The other theatre, betrayed by those entrusted with its guard, and demoralized in purpose, has become the receiving house for imitation operas and third-rate dancers; for indifferent singers in bad English, and indecent posturers in bad French.

Oh! ye of young England, who call forward actors at the end of a performance, who had presented no occasion for applause during the performance;—ye who are admirers of the beauty and talent of Emma Stanley, and who rejoice when Mrs. Keeley degrades her fine qualities as an actress by making a noddy of herself in a burlesque;—who encourage Buckstone, Wright, and Oxberry, in drowning the text of their author, when there is any, with impromptu gag of their own invention, and who firmly opine that Charles Kean is his father, Paul Bedford is John Reeve, and Sheridan Knowles Shakspeare. Ye gents, who clap your hands enthusiastically at the production of a drama which may be withdrawn the day after by the manager's good taste, or continued for fifty, sixty, aye eighty nights by the manager's perseverance.—The reins of whose judgment is the modern invention of announcing the name of the author on the bills in larger characters than the title of the piece; proclaiming among the many what was wont to be but whispered among the few, which of ye dare but insinuate that Bulwer, Sir Edward Bulwer, Sir Edward Lytton Bulwer, Sir Edward Bulwer Lytton, (what a puzzle of a name!) which among ye dare suggest that such a man was a perpetrator of dandy twaddle;—that his loftiest elevation was a clap-trap; his most successful witticism the underscoring a phrase for the compositor; and his most poetical effusion a wordy variation upon a hacknied com-

mon place. Oh! ye of young England, your rule has been sufficiently long to shew its effects. The two principal theatres have, as regards the drama, ceased to exist: our first tragedian has been and is a wanderer. Phelps, Mrs. Warner, and George Bennet exiled to Sadler's Wells, maintain with difficulty their fealty to the good old cause by forcing the cultivation of Shakspeare in a soil sacred to the memory of "Tippety Witchet," "Hot Codlings," and real water. The Haymarket, with a company of all tolerable, some excellent comedians, is powerless in tragedy, parrying the consequences of public apathy by a diminished staff and paucity of production, representing the same play until the very bills become a nuisance. Oh! ye of young England, does not all this suggest that a refined perception of excellence in acting has become extinct, and that dramatic criticism is now, compared with what it was when Hazlitt dissected Edward Kean, but as a pigmy to a giant?

We may endeavour on a future occasion, to trace the causes which have produced this effect, not only on the theatre itself, but on its frequenters, debasing at once the talent of the actors, and the judgment, consequently the intensity of enjoyment in the play goes generally.

Oppressed with these gloomy cogitations, with the dramatic horizon only remarkable for its obscurity, the old stager was culivened by a ray of light emanating from a quarter where he least of all calculated upon its existence, and under a management the last he would have expected it to shine upon. The nation, that raised Jem Crow Rice, revived our dulled sensibilities by furnishing the Princess's Theatre with a first-class, finished tragedian, in the person of Miss Cushmar. In no instance, that we have witnessed upon the stage, has mind obtained so signal a triumph as in the success of this lady. With a person something too tall, not naturally graceful, and so much inclining to the masculine as to suggest to herself the personation of male characters, (indicated by the withdrawn announcement of Romeo,) with what we must still call a singularity of countenance,—(though now familiarized to our sight, it has, in spite of prejudice for the antique, become to us almost beautiful,) and, with a voice of very confined compass, she has, by her powerful intellectual endowment, assisted materially by perhaps the finest pair of eyes, for the purpose, we ever saw, succeeded truly and intensely in expressing the various creations of our great dramatist, to an extent beyond what we should have thought it prudent in her to have attempted. Emilia, Lady Macbeth, Rosalind, and Beatrice were, we believe, never acted in London before by the same individual.

Of these Emilia was her first and best. It was in all respects a perfect performance. Her first words—

"You have little cause to say so."

with its quiet accompanying smile, were as finished and true to nature as the penetrating sarcasm of

"Some such squire it was
That turned your wit the seamy side without
And made you to suspect me with the Moor."

Again, the intensity of her appeal to Iago in

"I know thou didst not, thou'rt not such a villain.
Speak, for my heart is full."

And the startling energy with which she exclaimed

"By Heaven I do not!"

warmed our hearts with the reminiscence of what acting used to be in times gone by.

Her Lady Macbeth, though a fine performance, did not

satisfy the mind so fully. There was genius, energy, and intense feeling; but much of its violence might have been advantageously substituted by more delicately wrought indications of passion, controlled into abeyance, by mental command. Dignity in attitude, and a classic turn in the head and bust were scarcely enough studied, in a character which has so often to be on the stage, without much speaking. Those difficult lines, perhaps the most difficult to recite in Shakspeare, beginning

"The raven itself is hoarse," &c.

were given with a melo-dramatic gesticulation that marred materially their effectiveness. The sleep walking scene was indeed terrifically impressive.

The ease with which the same actress assumed the arch and playful Rosalind can only be conceived by those who witnessed it. The wonderful energy with which she is endowed can be made to condense itself on any point she wills. The only fear is that it may do too much. Her daughter of the banished Duke, though lady-like in playfulness while in petticoats, on assuming her boyish gear, did put on so natural a swagger, as made us sometimes almost forget it was a female in disguise. It was a delightful impersonation, full of genius, exciting all our attention, and taking, as it were, our applause by storm; yet when we got home, we suspected it to be a little over-done, that what we were wont to consider the gentle love-sick maiden, whose drollery was but an affectation, to mask her melancholy, could not have been that rollicking wag, that had so practised on our risibility.

This suspicion was confirmed by witnessing her Beatrice; here we were not beguiled by the boy's dress to forget we had, or should have had a lady before us. Amusing the performance might be, it was not true, it was not Shakspeare. The cutting wit of Beatrice required no assistance from extreme sarcasm in the utterer. It would have gained in poignancy by more of archness and less of gesticulation in its delivery. A young lady with half the vivacity of Miss Cushman's Beatrice, could not be tolerated in any family;—always running on to the stage laughing and looking back, she seems to have been cracking her jokes all over the house. Benedict is clearly not her only victim. With this fault in the conception as a whole, the execution in detail was perfect. Whatever was intended to be done was done well.

However clever we must allow this lady's performance of Meg Merrilies, we denounce the experiment. The piece itself was never a good one. Cut down as it was on this occasion, with an ineffective Dinmont and such a Dirk Hatterack, first-class acting in Meg Merrilies was entirely thrown away. Besides the very making up for such a character could not produce other than unfavourable prejudices in the mind of her audience. If this exhibition was Miss Cushman's own choice it was an imprudence, if imposed on her, by the management, it was a cruelty.

Perhaps the part in which she has been the most popular was that of Mrs. Haller in the Stranger. There was a keeping, an intensity and a pathos in this performance that we have not met since Miss O'Neill. It was excellent throughout. If we dare hint a misgiving, it is that there was something too much of shedding tears, a frequency of wiping the eyes. The play justifies all this we allow; but there was a sameness which we are sure Miss Cushman possesses resources in her mind to vary, and so erase a speck from what would else be spotless.

None can witness this lady's performance without being

struck by the resemblance of, not only her countenance, but the tone of her voice, and many of what we will call her mannerisms, with those of Mr. Macready. The similarity is more remarkable than any we have yet observed between individuals not having some relationship with each other; and, but that we have reason to believe the lady has approached her thirty-fifth summer, and our veteran tragedian to be not much beyond fifty, we should suppose them to be something nearer than cousins. As it is, we must conclude that similar physical formation in features and organs of sound, have facilitated the natural tendency to imitation, on the part of the lady, in adopting the peculiarities of one in whom she must have met, for the first time, a mind, temperament, and energy, congenial with her own. We care not how soon we see them together.

THE TRUNK MAKER.

MUSICAL SKETCHES.—Nº IV.

IF, after a night passed at the opera, the ears still haunted with the delightful and impassioned singing of the present Italian school, and the splendid effects produced by the instrumental pieces of the orchestra,—if, on returning to our chamber we should, in discursive mood, contrast the existing state of things with that in which they were two hundred-and-fifty years ago,—if, we could mentally convey ourselves back to that period, and imagine ourselves listening to what was then the perfection of operatic music, we might be almost tempted to suppose that some organic change had taken place in the auricular formation of the present generation. We can hardly conceive that persons similarly constructed should, at these two stages of the world's existence, have entertained such different notions of what constituted perfection, or, at all events, a source of pleasure to the sense of hearing. We doubt whether the change would be so great, between what is supposed the model of the Greek operatic school, and the period to which we have just alluded; for no perfection of performance would ever render the opera of A.D. 1600 palatable to a modern audience, to the scientific few it would afford a matter of interest, as contrasting two different states of the *ars musica*, but to the public at large, it could not give any, the least gratification,—a curious phenomena in the organ of hearing, for with the eye it is certainly not the same; what in the fine arts then pleased, when we look at the productions of that period, have still the same, if not a greater power of fascination. And we must remember that this is not a period that marks a nation just emerging from barbarism to another period when a point of civilization had been arrived at. In the beginning of the seventeenth century, the human intellect had been for some time emancipated from the dark mists that overshadowed the middle ages, and had shone forth with all the vigour and freshness of manhood. With regard to musical science, the principal rules were then as well understood as they are now; the vocal music of that period shews no lack of scientific knowledge, and no want of resources in harmonic combinations, as may be proved by the madrigals and compositions of that description. To what must we attribute this circumstance? The sense of hearing is precisely the same now as it was then; the lateral appendages of the head still perform the same functions. The answer is plain—that music has no standard; the taste seems to fluctuate according to the development that takes place in the art, much of which is merely mechanical. If then, past

experience warrants this assertion, we may infer that all the laborious efforts of the present school will, at some future time, sink into the same insignificance before some more gigantic system of combination. A humiliating reflection to the professors of the art, that all their boasted powers are doomed to the butterfly existence of the day.

In our last sketch, we hinted at this subject, and we will now endeavour to carry out this assertion, by contrasting the past, practically, with the present; by so doing, we shall be enabled to show how much music is dependent for its improvement on mere mechanical contrivance, and consequently, how fluctuating must be its standard.

The first opera, or it might more properly be called an oratorio, of which any accurate account has reached us, is one written by Emilio del Cavaliere, a Roman nobleman, it is called *Rappresentazione di Anima, e di Corpo*, and was represented in action, on a stage in a church at Rome. We may observe, *en passant*, that this composer imagined he had recovered in his recitative, that style of music which the ancient Greeks and Romans used in their theatres. The instruments used on this occasion were as follow:—

Una lira doppia, a double lyre;
Un clavicembalo, a harpsichord;
Un chitarone, a large or double guitar;
Due flaute, or vero due tibri all'antica, two common flutes.

At the time that this was performed, we may suppose that it created a great sensation among the *dilettanti* of that day; it was certainly considered a memorable musical achievement. Now we simply ask what amount of patience would it require in a modern audience, to sit out this representation; the effect of such a combination of instruments, would fall powerless on the tympana of the nineteenth century,—and yet the science is the same.

There were other instruments known at this period; for, in a concerto by the same author, we find the music was written for violin Francese, viol d'amore, viol da braccio, due viole da gamba, chitarra, teorbo, arpa, organ, and violone; of the effect of this, we had an opportunity of judging, as it was performed at the second Ancient concert of this season. It was much the same as if the stringed instruments of a modern orchestra were all muted; and, although very interesting and instructive, as shewing the then state of things, yet deserving no sort of notice as containing any power of creating positive sensations of delight, such as the music of the present day conveys to modern ears; and yet we must suppose that it afforded to the lovers of the art at that time, the same gratification that modern musical compositions would give to us.

We may add to these cornets, trumpets, lutes, and harpsichords, which are mentioned by Arture, an ecclesiastic of Bologna, as forming a part of the orchestra of that period; these, and regals, are enumerated in the catalogue of instruments prefixed to the opera of Orfeo, by Monteverde, performed in the year 1607. Such were the materials that composed the early orchestras. Let us now contrast this with our operatic band, which consists of fourteen first violins, thirteen second violins, eight violas, eight violoncellos, eight double basses, two flutes, two clarionets, two oboes, two bassoons, two trumpets, four horns, three trombones, one ophicleide, two cornets à piston, one drum, one bass drum, one side drum, one cymbal, one harp,—seventy-six performers in all. We may conceive the astonishment with which an artist of that day would be overwhelmed,

if he could be resuscitated, and brought to hear this gigantic combination; he would stand "*arrectis auribus*," doubting perhaps, the evidence of his senses; he would be wrapt in elysium at some of the softer passages; but, on hearing some of the grand crashes, which produce such extasy in a modern audience, he might—we speak in humility—he might, we say, think that a change had taken place in the English vocabulary, and that music and noise were now synonymous terms, and thank his stars he had not lived in these degenerate days.

These powers, producing such effect however, have been added but gradually and successively, as they have become known; it is only lately that the clarionets (some sixty or seventy years ago) and flutes of modern construction, have formed principal features; and much later still, have some of the brass instruments been added, and the ingenuities of mechanism are being daily applied to increase the orchestral strength; and it may happen, as we have said before, that what is now considered the *ne plus ultra* of the art, will, in a few short years, almost cease to interest, from the application of still greater mechanical resources—*sic transit gloria!*

W.

THE ROYAL ACADEMY.

WHILE we are penning the present notice, the Royal Academy is without a president—without a head! Plenty of tail, but no head. There is, somewhere, a hitch. The pinnacle remains unoccupied. Council after council meet, and separate without result. Those who would take the office are not asked, and those who have been asked wont have it. Why? Most respectable public, we will tell you why. It shall no longer be a mystery: we will disclose. Listen! It appears that new duties have been invented for presidents of Royal Academies. It has been discovered that Benjamin West and Sir Thomas Lawrence did nothing for art; the one because he was a Quaker, and the other because he could not afford it. In our stupid innocence, we always thought art could be best benefited by painting good pictures; but it has been discovered that the president's duty is to toady what are called literary men. "A great and salutary change" is pointed out. The successor of Sir Martin is said to "have an arduous and glorious career before him, with the difficulties of which he must grapple." He must keep open house for "men of mind, men of science, scholars, accomplished foreigners," &c. &c.; allowing them to drink his coffee and tear his carpets, *ad libitum*. This is no dream, but nearly word for word with the pompous announcement of a monthly publication; which—Heaven knows why—has assumed to itself the office of Sir Oracle, in all matters connected with taste. The writer ensconces himself in the example of Sir Joshua Reynolds; who, he says, was immortalized by his intercourse with men of genius. Fudge! Sir Joshua Reynolds was immortalized by his works: he was himself a man of genius, as we understand the term. His intercourse with literary men arose from taste, and was governed by selection. There were many, even at that period, never received by him. Difficulties to grapple with, quoth'aye. Artists find difficulties enough to grapple with in their own vocation; and, although a sculptor or an architect may—and does, to a considerable extent—make use of the labor of others, a painter depends for his support entirely on the exercise of his own fingers; and, whatever amount of genius he may possess, it is only by his own manipulation it can be communicated to the public. His time is fully occupied by an employment

he delights in; and he cannot understand the usefulness of interrupting his studies, or sacrificing his leisure, to the crowd who concoct paragraphs, in this precious age of steam presses and cheap education. Why, taking them from the highest, down to the portion of which this writer may be considered a specimen, their very name is legion. Let us quietly ask, in what way would art be benefited by this public inroad on the president's privacy? Will the writer own, that criticism on a painter's works may be affected by an introduction to the man? Is its asperity to be softened by personal acquaintance? Nay, we will ask him—can a perfectly unbiassed opinion be expected from an habitual associate? Why, we could go through the criticisms of that very work, and point out who were of the writer's clique, and who were those who valued his remarks at just their worth—no more.

We hope the president of the Academy (if that distinction passes to another name, of which there is a doubt,) will not mix up his interior duties—the performance of which are more than sufficient interruption to his studies as an artist—with the coffee and carpet business suggested by the writer alluded to.

CORRESPONDENCE.

TO THE EDITOR OF THE CONNOISSEUR.

"See if thou canst find out Sneak's noise, Mistress Tearsheet would fain hear some music."—*King Henry IV. Part ii. Act ii. Scene iv.*

What is Music? Aye, in sober seriousness I ask the question, or rather, I require a definition of the art, not a mere meaning of the word, and I will venture to say there are scarcely ten people who will define it alike; a practical musician would,—but I will leave a practical musician to say it—for I am none; an harmonious critic would describe it as a melody of sounds produced—but here again I am out of my element; a fox-hunter will have it, there is no music, (his own pet word,) like the animating cry of a pack of hounds; a washerwoman enjoys no music so much as the singing, (I beg you to observe her term,) of a tea-kettle; a miser can conceive no sound equal to the jingle of gold pieces; and I doubt not but that the profitable clatter of a shovel is celestial harmony in a sweep's ears; a dinner bell is music to a gourmand, the saddling bell to a jockey, the marriage chimes to a lover, the funeral knell to an heir;—What then I ask is music? and shall be much obliged for a definition that will suit every body.

I cannot play even a Jew's harp, yet I can enjoy an Erard's, and although I could listen to Grist for ever, I should not detect a false note in the same indefinite period. The fact is—music is music—a sound, or combination of sounds, whose qualities may be marked by the various adjectives, sublime, exquisite, fine, good, fair, passable, weak, indifferent, bad, wretched, and execrable; all these terms may be applied to music, and no two people could select the same on the same occasion; some folks are fastidious, some easy, some critical, some hypercritical, some modest, some presumptuous, some ignorant, some wise, some sensible, some foolish, all self-willed; what is one man's fish is another man's poison, and you may as well attempt to change the wind as alter an opinion. I have often thought Jullien would do well to compose a set of Quadrilles founded upon the Cries of London, and fine music, (in my humble opinion,) might be made of them. What think you of a Pastorale to the melodious cry of "Strawberries! fine ripe Hautboys! fourpence a pottle, Hautboys!" or, performing a "Balances," to a smiling beauty, to the somewhat treble accents of "Cats meat!" Let the worthy conductor of promenade concerts try his hand.

We have made out then, that every sound may be denominated music, in fact, that it is only another name for noise, and that therefore the ear alone must be judge whether such a noise is good or bad. We now approach the point, although every one has two extraordinarily shaped appendages, one on either side of the head, through which they imbibe sound—still, few people, musically speaking, have ears, and therefore it must be left to the few to say what sound or noise, if you will, or music, is fit to be listened to and what is not; for the fact of constantly listening to good music I apprehend may improve the ear, and enable it at length in some degree to judge for itself. There is an expression in Scripture that would seem to imply that many have ears not to hear, that is, not to understand what they hear, and certainly, as applied to music, lamentably many are the many. Let us then be guided by the taste and discretion of others, until our own ears, by constant application and attention to good music, become themselves available judges, and on no account ought we to presume, because we know the difference between a panpipe and an

organ, to pass an ignorant opinion upon the works of the immortal masters of the sublime art.

Having arrived at the conclusion I have all along had in view, I leave the rest in the hands of the Connoisseur, professing myself (if able) willing to learn, if he is both able and willing to teach, being persuaded that there is much good in his art, and much that may be most useful to one who professes to know no more than that

London, 1845.

MUSIC IS MUSIC.

DISCOVERY OF ANCIENT NINEVEH.—M. Botta, French Consul at Mosul, in Mesopotamia, led by a true antiquarian spirit of research, to utilize the opportunities of his position, had, by some means, obtained a clue to the supposed site of this ancient city, which continued enquiry tended to confirm. The evidences of success, collected at his own expense, were communicated to M. Jules Mohl, at Paris; these were, at once, laid before the French Institute, and the government, at its recommendation, immediately engaged the services of an able artist, M. Eugene Flondin, who arrived at Mosul in the month of May, 1844, provided with sufficient funds for purchasing the fee simple of a village, and for the employment of some two-hundred Arabs in the demolition of its houses, and the excavation of the ground beneath them.

This liberality has been rewarded by a restoration to the light of the sun of an entire palace, consisting of fifteen apartments,—that is to say, their walls. There appear no traces of a roof, which was probably of a combustible material; or, more probable still, the Assyrian monarch was content with a curtain, or a parasol. In the apartments were found stone rollers to flatten the floors, which had been apparently sanded or carpeted. At each door of interior communication, and at the principal entrances of the palace were placed two, four, and even eight, bulls of colossal size, having human heads. Four of the least injured of these are now on their route to Paris.

The most interesting portion of this discovery, consists in a double range of bas-reliefs in marble, thrown from their position at the destruction of Nineveh, 2,604 years ago, which M. Flondin has restored to the original brick-work fittings, even now remaining almost intact. The scenes depicted are either huntings, battles, or feastings; the furniture and ornaments indicating a state of perfection in the arts, difficult to comprehend among a people possessing neither windows nor flooring to their houses. It is remarkable, that, in the immense extent of these sculptured pictures (said to be half a league), no female figure has on any occasion been introduced.

It may be imagined that M. Flondin had many difficulties to encounter, in the prosecution of his undertaking. During six months exposed to the sun's rays, with the compass in one hand, and the pencil in the other, his labors were incessant; and it soon became a matter of congratulation that they were so. The Catholics have a convent at Mosul, and while Messrs. Botta and Flondin excavated Nineveh, the missionaries repaired their monastery. The natives suspected this building to be intended for a fortress, with which the holy men might mingle a little force with their persuasion; an insurrection was the consequence, and the convent was entirely destroyed. The movement extended itself amongst the Arabs employed at Nineveh, whose labors were interrupted, and the person of the artist seriously menaced. These difficulties were not to be successfully encountered by an individual, M. Flondin determined not to risk what had already been obtained; and slinging his portfolio on his shoulder, accompanied only by an Arab courier, he succeeded in traversing Asia Minor; and his drawings from the marbles sculptured by the con-

temporaries of Holophernes, in Mesopotamia, have become the delight of the artistic, the learned, and the idle of Paris in 1845.

Calcined by the fire, all the marbles are not capable of transportation; but it is said there are enough, if placed end to end, to ornament one side of the road from Paris to Neuilly. The French Chambers have voted 100,000*f.* for their transport, and on their arrival, the Babylonian Museum will be opened on the ground-floor of the Louvre, in the wing formerly occupied by a Corps de Garde, which has already been removed. The last accounts announced the embarkation of these precious remains on the Tigris, directed to the French Consul General, at Bagdad.

It may be interesting to some, to know that the inscriptions, which are as extensive as the bas-reliefs themselves, have the charm of being at present unintelligible. They are in a writing possessing but a single character, of an angular form, its repetition and situation constructing the letters or words of the language.

MUSIC & MUSICIANS.

WRITTEN IN IMITATION OF THE FIRST SATIRE OF HORACE,

By J. W. DIDLER.

Pray, Sir John, kindly tell me, how comes it to pass
Amongst all the musicians of every class,
Faith,—and amateurs too,—they will ne'er be content
With the blessings which heaven, in kindness, has sent?
For sweet music is surely a blessing to all,
Whate'er to a mortal, good or bad, may befall:
It delights us in health, and should haply the mind
By its grief be o'erwhelmed, in it solace we find.
Is it not very strange, that any should evil,
And, instead of a blessing, find nothing but evil?
I mean evil in this—and I don't speak in haste—
That the music don't happen to suit their own taste.
Here this one cries out give me nothing but Handel,
For others I care not a farthing rush candle;
Another then says, Write music!—if any can?—
There's but one that I care for—and Haydn's the man:
This one turns up his nose, and cries out for his part—
He don't care who knows it—give him only Mozart;
Oh! Beethoven for me, says the boy just from school—
Who, by dint of hard work, writes a canon by rule—
Beethoven's immortal, if others don't like him,
I pity his taste, if his music don't strike him;
The opera critic, who only is easy
When he gives up his soul to a Pasta or Grisi,
Cries hang those dry chaps—to the devil I send them,
And all their fine music—I can't comprehend them;
But Bellini or *di tutti sopra detti*,
Quello che mi piace piu e Donizetti.
Let's suppose now, that some one—for instance, let me—
Just say to them all, to each wish I agree,
You lover of Handel, and you of Mozart,
Beethoven, and Haydn, shall content each his heart—
You shall stick to the writer who pleases you best,
And all happy with him, bid adieu to the rest;
You, from this time for ever, no more shall be bor'd
With the beauties that eke in the others are stor'd,
And you, amorous wooer of the soft honied hive,
With Italian sweets shall be smothered alive:
There, now go your own ways, for you cannot complain,
You shall never by others be troubled again;—
What! are you not willing?—then why do you stay?
You have got what you wish for—go quickly away;
Why then pause, sir?—when all to yourself you can get
Your own dear pet composer—not satisfied yet?
It is really too bad!—then why did you grumble,
And always at others in mutters did mumble?—
By heav'n's! I wish it could now come to pass,
That your ears might be lengthened like those of an ass,
And instead of those sounds, which such pleasure convey,
May you never hear ought but your own double bray;
Ere too late learn this truth—store it up in your mind—
Don't think others lack beauty, which you cannot find,
For all have some beauties, tho' you can not see 'em,
Because they're not booked in your pretty museum.

THE BRUSSELS OPERA COMPANY.

How far successful this spirited undertaking may have been, in a pecuniary point of view, we know not; it was certainly hazardous thus to transplant a whole troop, at a time when the Italian opera was advancing from triumph to triumph, in a blaze of splendour and success almost unequalled; and at a time too when the London season was drawing to a close, a climax fatal to any patronage from an English audience; coming too, as they did, without any preparatory flourish, to bespeak even a favorable hearing. We may congratulate them, at least, on having made a stand, a result which only could take place from intrinsic merit; that they have deserved the patronage they have received, no one who has heard them can doubt. Individually taken, the singers may not be equal to the first-rates of the Italian opera; the band, too, in point of strength, may not come up to that of the more favored precinct, but the performance, as a whole, is far more effective; there is a sacrifice of self for the general effect, which we in vain look for elsewhere, and the accompaniment by the band, is far superior than can be elicited from even the able conducting of Signor Costa.

As for our English operatics—much as a national feeling would prompt us to uphold them—we must confess that they fail in comparison with this company; where an energy of purpose is apparent in all departments, that must lead to successful results; this is wanting with us, there is a listlessness, which could never exist if our artists were imbued with the love of their art—a matter of much doubt. Our opera business is managed like a simple pecuniary speculation, by which each is to get as much as he can, and, consequently, it is always in a tottering state; but with the Brussels company, it seems different,—they must, at their onset, have met with discouragement and pecuniary loss, sufficient to have damped their ardour; they have manfully struggled against the stream, and we hope, ere this, have received the reward of their exertions.

HOP INTELLIGENCE.—We have to announce that one description of hop is going out of season, but another will soon be in. The former, which may be called the Italian hop, flourishes principally on boards; the latter—the Kent—is indigenous to the soil. We can only hope that the amount paid for Kent pockets, will bear some proportion to that paid into Italian pockets, but we fear that the heavy duty of the Kent much outweighs the light duty of the Italian hop.

LOOKER-ON.

HOGARTH'S ENRAGED MUSICIAN.—It is generally supposed that the exquisite stroke of humour depicted in the picture of the Enraged Musician, was intended to represent Dr. Arne, but Dr. Burney in his History of Music, says that the person intended was Signor Castrucci, a celebrated violin player in those days, and who was generally considered half mad. Previous to making the drawing, the painter was also wag enough to have the unfortunate musician's house beset by all the noisy street instruments he could collect together, whose clamorous performance brought the distracted Castrucci to the window in all the agonies of auricular torture.

NEW SINGING TUTOR.—We hear that Mount Vesuvius has lately been amusing the good people in its neighbourhood, by emitting certain rumbling sounds, very much resembling the guttural grumbling of some of the bass singers of the present day. It is understood that these artists intend forthwith to rush to this favored spot, to perfect themselves in their art, seeing, that by no possibility could they ever have a finer specimen of the "De profundis" growl.

SADLER'S WELLS.—We honor Mr. Phelps for the stand he is making in favor of the legitimate. We had been used to look upon that gentleman as the very best of the second class actors, but every succeeding performance we witness, is an added evidence to support his pretensions to a higher rank. Whatever may be his proportion as a tragedian, compared with Mr. Macready, there is no one on the stage that ranks between them. We admire, above all, the perfection of management observable in this theatre: what talent there is, is made the most of. Plays are put upon the stage, up to a certain point, complete. What we have to complain of in Mr. Phelps, is, that he has done nothing for the drama's permanence. He has not introduced, or attempted to introduce, one new actor, male or female, to the public. We shall, on a future occasion, dilate more largely on this consequence of actor management in England, as compared with the facilities observable under a different system in Paris, and on the continent generally.

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OPERA SMALL TALK, A.D. 1845.

SCENE—The Crush Room. TIME—Half-past Twelve.

LADY F.— * * * How beautifully Grisi sung!

LADY G.—I did n't hear her—I've only just come. He! he! he! he!

LADY F.—Only just come! Why, I've been here all the evening.

LADY G.—La! what a bore it must have been. He! he!

[Lady F. walks indignantly away.]

HON. MR. S. [in a drawing tone.]—Splendid opera to-night, Lady G.

LADY G.—I have n't heard it—only just come. He! he! he! he!

HON. MR. S. [not hearing her.]—Grisi sung like an angel!

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[Hon. Mr. S. looks vacant and walks on.]

MONS. LE COMTE.—Ah! madame, J'ai l'honneur de saluer you. You have admire de opera?

LADY G.—Oh no!—I've only just come. He! he! he! he!

MONS. LE COMTE.—He! he! Ah! quel drôle, vous êtes bien drôle. Madame, you make de laugh, he! he! J'ai l'honneur.

[Mons. Le Comte stares in astonishment, and walks on.]

LADY G. [soliloquy.]—What a charming, sensible man. He! he!

LORD M.—Ah! Lady G. I've only just caught sight of you.

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A voice is heard.—Lady G.'s carriage stops the way!

LORD M.—Only just come! He! he! That's d—d good. He! he! I must tell that to the fellows at the club to-night. [Offers his arm—exeunt.]

We have seen a very characteristic and highly finished portrait of Miss Delcy, drawn from life, and on stone, by Mr. T. H. Maguire, with that faithfulness of resemblance, of which his name is a guarantee.

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E. B. Murillo, pinx^t

H. C. M. lithog^s



IL CAPRICCIO È LA RAGIONE,

1

Arietta,

Composta dal D. Crivelli.

PIANO
FORTE.

Di se-guir virtù giu-

rai..... ma non ressi al gran ca_min Ra-gi-on san-ta a per-chè

mai Hai la no_ia per con_fin hai la noi a..... per con-

2

fin... La fol_lia gentil.... mi par__ve E nuo_tai nel suo pia_

p *p* sotto voce.

ce_re Ma l'e_tà fu_go..... le lar_ve Di quel fer__vi_do pia_

cer Di quel fer__vi__do pia__cer. L'astol_

tez_za, e la ra_gio_ne Mi ri_vol_sia con sul_ta_re E l'an_

3

ti-ca mia ten-zio-ne Seppe in pa-ce tras-for-mar Seppe in

rall: *1^{mo} tempo.*

pa-ce tras-for-mar. Quindi vi-vo in con-ten-tezz-a Nella

col canto.

du-pli-ce u-nio-ne Per a-mante ho l'as-tol-tez-za Ho per

gui-da la ra-gion, Ho.... per gui.....da la..... ra.....

gi-on, Del cor mio vari...o,e vi...va...ce Si di...

p

...vi...do...no il pia...ce...re L'una ha in cu...ra la mia

pa...ce L'al...tra for...ma il mio pia...cer, L'al...tra

for... ma il mio pia...cer.